

Safety and Occupational Health Action Plan Priority Recommendations: Communications Leadership Implementation Strategy Highlights and Timeline

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SUMMARY

The Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs will assume responsibility for internal communications recommendations related to Bureau-wide implementation of initial (and ongoing) activities of Reclamation's Safety and Occupational Health (SOH) Program. It will also support interaction between Reclamation, its Federal partners, stakeholders and other interested parties regarding program activities.

This Implementation Strategy and Timeline sets out the initial phase of internal communications tasks and assignments, addressing communications-related priority tasks identified by the Reclamation Safety Advisory Board.

STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this strategy is to identify specific and achievable actions and timelines for the initial communications activities that comport with the Board's priority recommendations. In this document, all communications-related recommendations, without regard to priority, are to be addressed in this initial phase.

PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

SOH PROGRAM VISION STATEMENT

[Recommendation #27 – Priority 1]

For the purposes of this document, it is stipulated that all internal and external communication materials – to include tactical communications plans, campaign strategies, talking points, memos, corporate products and other materials – **immediately** reflect the values and goals expressed in the SOH Vision Statement approved by the Reclamation Leadership Team in January 2015:

“Reclamation embraces safety excellence by empowering employees and integrating safety into our mission, achieving a culture which results in a safe environment for our employees, contractors, visitors and the public.”

This vision statement is to be personalized among all individuals within the Reclamation culture – and among all those with whom we come in contact – using an underlying and uncompromising declaration: “I care about safety.”

THE ‘I CARE ABOUT SAFETY’ MOTTO

[Recommendation #36 – Priority 1]

The first wave of our internal communications campaign will be to **immediately** establish, underscore and provide supporting workplace and employee materials that emphasize the motto ‘I Care About Safety.’ This emphasis must be the establishing theme and underlying personal message expressed in all materials – from the first message to employees from the Commissioner, through the deployment of workplace banners and placards, to individual items such as buttons and stickers. The initial campaign will emphasize the full ‘I Care About Safety’ motto and subsequent, smaller-format materials will be deployed using shorthand phrases (i.e. ‘I Care’ or ‘I.C.A.S.’) to provide visual cues to reinforce the broader motto.

Materials will be designed and an acquisition plan will be developed before the conclusion of **FY16/Q4** and deployment of materials will begin in **FY17/Q1**.

[NOTE: WO firmly believes that the leading audience and beneficiaries of these materials will be Reclamation employees who are members of trade unions and other professional organizations such as AFGE, IAF, IAM, IBEW, IFPTE, LIUNA and Ironworkers. In cooperation with the Reclamation Partnership Council, we propose to **immediately** seek to negotiate co-branding and distribution agreements for safety materials with these and other relevant organizations. In other words, banners flying with safety messages in workplaces should optimally carry the logos of Reclamation AND these unions/associations to emphasize our joint commitment to employee safety. We believe buttons and stickers reflecting the Reclamation safety motto will have greater employee utilization if the individual’s union affiliation is reflected alongside the Reclamation logo.

ADDITIONALLY: WO believes our ongoing safety communications program would benefit from an informational consultation with communications specialists of the National Safety Council, which has experience in delivering high-level safety messaging to employees in workplaces across the United States. This contact will help refine and endorse the varied communications tactics envisioned within recommendation #26. We propose to open those channels on an exploratory basis **as soon as practicable** with the goal of developing the next phase of communications strategies and tactics to follow this initial implementation.]

EMPHASIZE LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS AND EMPHASIZE SOH TOOLS

[Recommendation #37, 20 – Priority 1, 3]

The success of this program is dependent upon the repeated emphasis of its principal themes and a commitment by leadership to significantly address the ‘cultural complacency’ that was identified in a Department of the Interior review of the Reclamation SOH program in early 2013.

To assist in achieving this goal, a compact, concise and clearly written brochure, entitled ‘**Field Guide for Managers: Communicating Safety,**’ will be developed for distribution in **FY17/Q1**. The field guide will include high-level talking points, a listing of online resources for managers to share with employees, and other relevant information regarding the SOH Program – including

the services and expertise available. Materials will also be replicated on a USBR Intranet '**Safety Communications Toolbox**' to be developed and deployed simultaneously with notifications to all employees of the availability of these resources.

Select talks to employees by Washington, Denver, regional, area office and project leaders on safety issues will also be video recorded and highlights shared via internal channels. Examples of successful and persuasive communications techniques on safety will also be shared through the intranet toolbox.

LEVERAGE INFORMATION RESOURCES OFFICE TOOLS FOR SAFETY MESSAGING

[Recommendations #73, 74 – Priority 1]

Public Affairs will work jointly with the Information Resources Office (IRO) to develop rotating and ongoing messaging on IRO systems that all employees use on a regular basis, including the Electronic Time and Attendance System, Reclamation Intranet, BisonConnect and other internal systems when feasible. A plan outlining the specific potential sites for such communication, and the graphic designs for safety messaging, will be researched and developed by **September 15, 2016**.

SUPPORT RELEASE OF AFTER-ACTION REPORTS ON SERIOUS ACCIDENTS

[Recommendations #66, 67 – Priority 2]

Although notes on this recommendation indicate the quick distribution of these after-action reports within 48 hours of an accident may not be feasible, we believe a redacted summary of findings, when coordinated through the regional Public Affairs office, could reasonably be distributed within this time frame. It is proposed that the next serious incident (which hopefully will not occur for several years) can serve as an opportunity to test this strategy.

PRODUCE BIMONTHLY TRAINING VIDEOS ON SPECIFIC SAFETY ISSUES

[Recommendation #86 – Priority 2.5]

Public Affairs will dedicate resources to the SOH Program to record and edit short videos – not to exceed 10 minutes running time – that can be part of a topical library for safety training. We propose to develop a plan for the production of these videos by **September 15, 2016** and to have completed and deployed two bimonthly videos by the end of **FY17/Q1**.

PROVIDE CREATIVE SUPPORT TO SOH QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

[Recommendation #64 – Priority 3]

Public Affairs will review content and provide creative assistance to SOH in the development and distribution of the program's quarterly newsletter to ensure its broad appeal and interest as well as its adherence to program goals and messages. This coordination will begin **immediately** and will be reflected in the first quarterly newsletter to be released in **FY17/Q1**.

SUPPORT ALL-EMPLOYEE MESSAGING, SURVEY LANGUAGE AND OTHER TOOLS

[Recommendations #22, 28 – Priority 3]

Public Affairs will continue to review and provide **ongoing** creative support to internal communications materials with regard to employee safety to ensure their broad appeal and interest to all targeted audiences.

CONCLUSION

On behalf of the Commissioner, the Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs is comprised of multimedia and messaging professionals, national-level partnerships and alliances, as well as access to the technical resources of the Department of the Interior and its constituent bureaus and agencies to provide support for a nationally focused communications effort such as the SOH Program safety campaign.

This office is prepared to address the proposed recommendations relating to safety communications that can give this effort a rapid start and target the workspaces in the organization where employees are considered at risk for workplace injury.

To summarize the commitments addressed in this implementation strategy, the following table will summarize the timeline and actions targeted for completion pending endorsement by the Reclamation Safety Advisory Board:

Task	Due Date	Assigned To	Recommendation #
Incorporate SOH Program Vision Statement in All Materials	Immediate	WO Public Affairs	27
Incorporate 'I Care About Safety' Motto	Immediate	WO Public Affairs	36
Corporate Materials Acquisition Plan	FY 16/Q4	WO Public Affairs/SOH	36
Corporate Materials Deployment	FY 17/Q1	WO Public Affairs/SOH	36
Begin Discussions to Co-Brand Materials with Unions/Professional Organizations	Immediate	WO Public Affairs/ Reclamation Partnership Council	36
Open Consultation Discussions with National Safety Council	ASAP	WO Public Affairs	36, 26
Develop Safety Communications Field Guide and Intranet Toolbox	FY 17/Q1	WO Public Affairs/SOH	37, 20
Develop IT System Flash Messages (e.g. ETAS)	9/15/16	WO Public Affairs/IRO	73, 74
Support Release of After-Action Reports	As Needed	WO and Regional Public Affairs/SOH	66, 67
Develop Bi-Monthly Safety Training Video Plan	9/15/16	WO Public Affairs/SOH	86, 87
Produce 2 Bi-Monthly Safety Training Videos	FY17/Q1	WO Public Affairs/SOH	86, 87
Provide support to SOH Quarterly Newsletter	Immediate	WO Public Affairs/SOH	64
Support All-Employee Messaging, Survey Language & Other Messaging Tools	Ongoing	WO Public Affairs/SOH	22, 28